

Lutheran Women in Mission

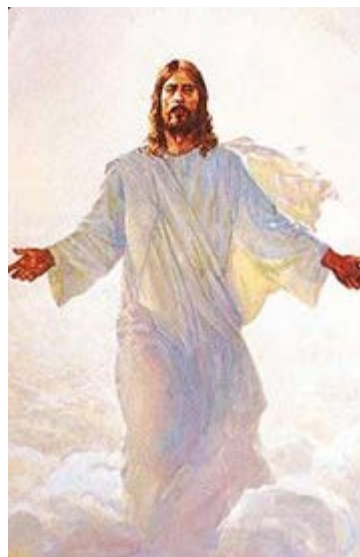


Be Assured! *by Marie Biesenthal*

Opening

Sing or read the hymn "If You But Trust in God to Guide You" (*TLH* 518, *LW* 420, *LBW* 453) or "Blessed Assurance" or "Behold What Manner of Love" (both from *The Other Songbook*).

Webster offers several definitions for assurance: certain, sure, confident, a guarantee, a promise. How people today yearn for assurance—even Christians! It is sad that so many who know Jesus do not understand the joy of living life to the full and are not sure about their destiny. They have doubts and wonder where God is when there are trials and tribulations.



How can they gain the assurance that because Jesus lives, they have a saving God? How can they be sure of living abundantly here on earth and eternally with Him?

1. Be Assured! Keep Your Eyes Fixed on Jesus!

He is the ONE, the only Savior. You can count on Him because of who He is and what He does. How do these verses help and assure you?

- **1 Timothy 2:5**
- **John 14:6**
- **Hebrews 10:19-23**
- **Hebrews 3:1**
- **Hebrews 12:1-3**

But there may be obstacles to keeping our assurance, so:

- Prepare your minds. How do we do that? See **1 Peter 1:13-16**.
- Avoid roadblocks. What warnings does Scripture give us? See:

- **Genesis 19:17, 24-26**
- **Nehemiah 4:7-10**
- **Matthew 13:58**
- **Luke 9:18-20**

2. Be assured! Be strengthened by a daily walk in His Word and regular use of the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

Our human nature dictates the need for assistance, but help is there for all in God's Word! What encouragement do the following verses offer?

- **Joshua 1:8-9**
- **Matthew 7:24-25**
- **Luke 11:28**
- **Revelation 1:1-3**

3. Be assured! Your sins are forgiven!

Sometimes it's difficult to realize that Jesus sacrificed His life for us...for ME! But He did! Read aloud **John 3:16**, inserting at the end "and that includes me!"

What additional insights do these verses give you about God's forgiveness?

- **Isaiah 43:25 and 44:22**
- **1 John 1:8-9**
- **Psalms 103:3-4**
- **Ephesians 1:7-8a**

These verses make it clear that it is not our good works that give us a pass to new life with the Lord now and eternally. Only our faith in Christ as our living, loving Savior opens that new relationship and the heavenly mansions for us. We don't have to earn it or do anything except believe!

4. Be assured! With the certainty of forgiveness comes joy!

As the rising of the sun, so sure is the promise of great joy for those who depend on God's grace and mercy. Joy is one of the nine fruits listed in the fruit basket of the Spirit (see Galatians 5:22-23). How do these promises of joy encourage you?

- **Psalms 16:11**
- **Isaiah 35:10**
- **Romans 14:17**

5. Assured! Share your confidence with others!

The love of Christ is news too good to keep to ourselves. Yet, how often we treat it like a secret. Why?

What does Scripture urge us to do? See:

- **1 Peter 2:9 and 3:15**
- **Matthew 10:32**

6. Assured! Live out your life with joy and thanksgiving!

Remember that He is our God for NOW, not only a God for some far-off future life. When we live life NOW by faith in the Son of God, all is changed! All is new!

Closing

Sing "I Know That My Redeemer Lives" (*LW* 64, *TLH* 200, *LBW* 352) or "Hallelujah, What a

Savior" (*The Other Songbook*).

Pray together: O God of grace, You sent Your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, to bring life and immortality to light. We give You thanks that by His death He destroyed the power of death and by His resurrection He opened the Kingdom of heaven to all believers. Strengthen us in the confidence that because He lives we shall live also and that neither death nor life nor things present nor things to come will be able to separate us from your love which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Marie Biesenthal, St. Louis, MO, is LCMS Administrator for Pentecost 2000, an effort to start 1,000 new ethnic ministries by 2004. She has served the LWML in various capacities for 21 years.
